The Quarterbreed

An Indian Reservation Tale by ROBERT AMES BENNET

The three preceding installments described the rescue of a quarterbreed girl and two men from an Indian attack at the edge of Lakotah Indian reservation by Capt. Floyd Hardy, U. S. A., the new Indian agent. The rescued ones are Reginald Vandervyn, nephew of United States Senator Clemmer and agency clerk, Jacques Dupont, post trader, and his daughter, Marie. Vandervyn tells Hardy of disaffection among the Indians, of the murder of Nogen, the last agent, and of his having been promised the agency. Hardy calls a council of head tribesmen. Redbear, the halfbreed interpreter, brings his pretty sister, Oinna, to the vailey. The new agent learns that the Indians have been cheated and has reason to suspect Dupont and Vandervyn of crookedness. He plans to square matters with the tribesmen. How Captain Hardy is thwarted in his purpose, how his life is endangered, how Vandervyn shows his true character, is told in very absorbing style in this installment.

CHAPTER VI-Continued.

turned his steady gaze from Thowa- knives."

"The chief is not angry," he said. the Lilling of Mr. Nogen on the trabe. If there are any metabors of the tribe who are doing wrong, the chiefs should here me make all do richt."

This time Redbear did not besitute. He forced the assembly and relied our had of Labotah with destructe fa-Almost intoching Thewns with in lightion, his voice impassioned. When he had spoken, he remained

"He says he is angry," began Red-

"No." brusquely contradicted Hardy, "Look at his face. The others are angered. He is not. There is some misunderstanding. Re careful that you

interpret correctly." "He says he is angry," insisted Redbear, his slifelong glance looking past Hardy to Vandervyn, who was nodding reassuringly. "He says he is trying to keep it inside, but the others can't to an away or there will be fighting."

Hardy straightened on his chair, and his look became severe. He spoke shamily: "Tell the chief it is useless to ask me to go away. I do not wish to send for the Longimiyes. But they was some and dight the tribe if there

ers interpretation was folcel by a lush more thread-mag than, and a congratulatory fistel. go duces or enterios. Vandervyn bas my bounded to the pollection. They me stong under the exertising of the relicise tutti they were behind the Where's Churlie white man. Hardy heard the soft a none of their me ensined feet in the 108 silver and the families of the po-

test. He looked around and frowned. timbelt wished no demonstration.

of for ... and kardy. "With slace the pulice are fore-Product with horizon feet already arrived. Inthe close emotion work it matters come to a scrap, and there's Marie out

to one the fund hisnly turned around to look at the daring girl. She stood on a slight knott today between the assembled Indians

and her father's colon. Take her back to the house," he or-

you and Charae just now? The police tany not stay loyal if-"

The command was peremptory, Vandervyn started off, yet contrived to ex-



Ti-owa-Konza Rose to Reply, His Face Ablaze With Indignation.

change giances with Bedbear. Hardy studied the semicircle of waiting in- if they've taken this violent dislike to dians with a resolute gaze, and, as you- Why ever did you come? You before, fixed his attention upon Ti-owa-

of this ill feeling," he remarked to the halfbreed. "Ask them why they are opposed to their young men trading ore for Dupont's goods,"

Redbear spoke slowly to the Indians, his manner not unlike that of a man who approaches a barrel of gunpowder with a lighted torch. There was no explosion, but the old bend chief flared with unmistakable anger. He replied with a flery declamation that won

grunts of approval from his fellows.

has he interpreted; "He-he says there I vyn, twisting the tip of his blond musshall be no more barter of ore. He tache, "It is for you to decide to Unseen by his superior, Vandervyn says all over again that this is the leave for the good of the tribe, or nodded encouragingly to Redbear and land of his tribe, and white men have to stay and take the chance of an up-Smiled at the ladians. Hardy had not no right here, and he hates all Long- rising."

"Tell him that he is mistaken. The Hardy, "Perhaps it might be better soldiers have always been the best for all concerned if I should leave," "We shall seen be friends. Tell him friends of the Indians. I find that, that I come in peace, with a good heart after next spring, no more food and broke in Dupont, "Tain't no joke towns (all the tribe, I do not blame goods are to be issued to the tribe, Them ornery cusses 'B git you like Sconer or later, white men will come they done with Nogen, just as sure man have stone any wrong to and take the ere if the Indians do not as shooting." the tribe, I shall step the wrangloing, dig it themselves. Another thing, I | Vandervyn shot a furious glance at believe the tribe should agree to the the blunderer. Marie was looking at dividing up of their hand, so that each Blardy. But she did not need to see bened of a family can have his own the tightening of his fips to realize som and work if after the namer of what her father had done. the white men. Other tribes have done "Oh. Pere!" she reproached. "Why did you say it? You should have this, and they are no longer poor,"

Hedbear bestated, stepped more known Captain Hardy could not leave and rose to reply, his face ablaze aside from Hardy, and began to pour after that out a terrent of Lakotah. He had spoicen only a few sentences when a wave. Hardy, I agitation passed over the semicircle i Indians. Blankets slipped down Dupont. om copper-red shoulders; heree eyes glared menacingly at Hardy. Several cut in. "You've put it up to him that I the more excitable bucks leaped up it would be deserting his post under ith bow and ritle in hand.

Hardy thrust out from among the leave now even if he knew his staying police and raised his hands to Ti-own here meant certain massacre for us kenza in the pence sign. The head nil, followed by certain massacre of thef called to his fellows and turned the tribe by the troops, his back upon the agent with delibernie contempt. All the others faced least one more effort to pacify the about and followed him to the waiting tribe," replied Hardy, "You are at hold it inside. He says you have got pontes. The band mounted and role liberty to resign whenever you please. off up the valley in morese silence.

CHAPTER VII.

The Common Law.

There was still more than a trace of knew there is not one of the iribe who red in Hardy's sallow cheeks when May would harm the, even in an outbreak," rie. Vandervyn and Dupont came ta upon loss at the office. Dupons held then

By mr. Cup." for said, "you sure ford a roughty stone squark of it that time. Gives out Ti got all-fired hot, wait a few days for the excitement to girl silewed him to draw her closer.

"Reflect? I sent him to resource

"That was very thoughtful of you

"How so?" queried Hardy.

"Of course, you'll famou I am thinks friendship," out of my promotion. But it's not. Dupont paused to scratch the side sweetheart," he said. thur ar all: Ask Jahre'

nent. "The whole famels was crazy to shoot you; they'd done it, too, only Charlie sings out to 'em that Mr. Van was going to be agent, and you'd go

"He said that?"

"Oh, captain, don't be angry at Charlie," interceded Marie. "He had to do

"But why? I could not have been more friendly. Yet everything I said seemed to anger them." "I told you they're a ornery bunch."

replied Dupont. "It was for because queried Hardy. you being an officer. The chiefs hate all soldiers like pizen. Most of the old ones was in the ghost-dance craze, and got tailed by the soldiers." "They may cool down and be willing hand,"

to listen to reason," argued Hardy. "Cool down? They'll go back and sit and stew and stew till hell boils lifted Hardy. over. Next thing happens, they'll stir up the young bucks. Nom d'un chien! Just when I was gitting enough ahead in my business to take care of my old age and give Marie a chance to be a lady-to stand to lose everything and her and my scalp to boot!"

"You are free to leave here with her

whenever you wish." "No, I sin't. I can't leave my store

all my property." "There would be no danger if it were not for you," said Marie, her yes flashing with indignation. 715 aly you had not come here! If there s an outbreak, it will be all your fault !"

"Oh, I know you mean well. But saw how they like Mr. Van. Had they thought you would insist on staying. We must learn what is the cause nothing could have kept them from attacking you. But the promise that you," Mr. Van is to be their agent, that pacified them. - Had you never come here, all this would not have happened. The chiefs would have come to talk with Mr. Van, and would have gone back

> Hardy swung around in his chair to self and the Dupont house. He did scrutinize the guileless face of Van-

Then the door opened a scant inch. "Hello!" he said. "Where's your his face dark with suspicion. brother?"

"He has has gone to tell the poe familles,"

"On the agent's mare," guessed Vanervyn.

"Please-he didn't mean any harmdease don't tell on him."

"That depends," replied Vandervyn. To you think I care to favor him

hen you act as if you hate me?" "Hate? No, no!" The door opened everal inches and as suddenly closed o a narrow crack,

But Vandervyn had caught a glimpse f the girl's blushing face. His voice ropped to a caressing tone: "You're of afraid of me, are you, just because wanted a kiss? Come out here and lk. I won't bite you."

"You promise not to-to kiss me?" "Not unless you wish me to."

"But-but I do!" came back the nive confession. Impulsively he started to swing off s pony. The cabin door shut with manner. bang. He straightened in the saddle, sited a long moment, frowned heav-

and started to ride away. From the window came a plaintive people?"

y: "Oh, please, please!" He deliberately dismounted, flung be reins over his horse's head, and "The way you put it-" considered ger, frightened face within blushed "You bet it would, Cap," engerly

See here," he admonished, "If you're ing to be stilly, I shall go away for marry Indian fashion."



"Quite right, Miss Dupont," said

"You mean, you won't leave?" asked

"How can he?" Vandervyn smoothly

fire. He's an army office -- he wouldn't

"I will remain until I have made at

Mr. Dupont has ample time to remove

his goods and his daughter from the

"Well, melbe not," admitted her fa-

"I gether that I am the only person

who seems to be endangered," re-

"They won't come ag'in to meet you

and I make a trip to the camps, to see

soon as you have tried to benefit them."

"And that Mr. Van'il be next agent."

"Will you tell them that I am here

"Trust me to put it to them strong

"After I have done what I can do to

"I do so hope Mr. Van can persuade

them to be friendly with you," said

Marie. "I know he and Charlie will

be perfectly safe. But it will be hard

to talk them out of their strange dis-

like to you. When will you start, Reg-

"Early tomorrow morning, if the cap-

"The sooner the better," agreed

"I'll go and remove my council cos-

turne," said Vandervyn, smiling at his

Marie and her father rose with him

Hardy bowed out the girl and returned

to his desk. He was deep in the midst

of a report on the tribe when, half an

hour later, Vandervyn returned to the

"Charlie may not come back this

afternoon," he remarked. "I thought

I might ride down and tell him about

"Very well. I shall be obliged," re-

plied Hardy, and he returned to his

Vandervyn rode down along the far

side of the stream, keeping the thick-

ets as much as possible between him-

not recross the creek until he was op-

posite Redbear's home. He found the cabin door closed. But at a slight

movement of the window curtains his

tain has no objections."

irrepreachable frock cent.

office in his riding togs.

study of the report.

Hardy.

improve conditions among them," qual-

to help them and to be their friend?"

"Then I shall go to them"

reservation,"

predicted Dupont.

elded Ducont.

it Will Be Hard to Talk Them Out of Their Strange Dislike for You."

sed. You're got the door barred and "Not me," declared Marie; "I don't to know I shall not try to crawl nie what Pere and Reggie say; I at a hele like this."

'i-1 won't be," she faltered. "That's better," he said, and he reached in to slip his arm around her

trembling shoulders. Strinking yet yielding, with eyes intelly described and office cheeks method Hardy. "This being we I will burning with bliesful shame, the young decide, and will then call another Her lips quivered, yet she rulsed them to meet his kiss.

"There!" he rallied. "Was it so

"Int it would be for more considers claimed Marie, her spiculid eyes will insciently at an Innocent to if you would leave the reserva- -ting with concern. "Surely you will young girl. He put the forefacer of not venture along the cutops." his free hand under her chin and "The tribe must learn that I must raised her bend to take a second kies, "One good turn deserves another,

of his head. But Vandersyn spoke "You should not-not call me that." I got it from the ploece," said Du. without an instant's hesitancy; "You she whispered. "You are a gentleman have no right to threw your life near white man; I am only a halfbreedusclessly, captain. Suppose Charile I'm yellow as a Chinaman."

"No-golden. You are my golden if we cannot quiet the tribe and talk girl. Your cheeks are wild roses and the chiefs into giving you another honey gold. Your eyes are like a hearing? If you have no objection, we fawn's; your lips sweet as honeycould tell them that you cannot leave Another kiss- There, that's more like just now, but that you will do so as it. You're learning how, New look at me."

> She raised her drooping lids with the sudden, desperate courage of one who is very shy, and gazed up at him, her tender eyes starlike with the soft glow of her love and adoration.

"You-you really like me?" she

captain," assured Vandervyn, "I know whispered. you'll play fair by resigning in my fa-"No. I hate you like poor Lo hates ver as seen as you have the tribe in firewater. Give him a taste, and he

wants it all. I want you." "Charlie-he said I must marry a white man. I am joyed in my heart-

You say you want me! But I am only a halfbreed girl, and you-"You're my honey-sweet girlle, Go

and open the door," She looked up at him again full and direct, and his gaze sank before the trust in her clear eyes.

"You want me to be your engaged girl!" she murmured, "When people are engaged, they are going to be married. Chartle said I must marry a white man, a good white man, You are kind to me. It is wonderful, I have read that even army officers have married halfbreed girls. But you are very good to think of marrying me."

her enraptured gaze: "What else did you think I meant when I kissed you? Of course we shall be married. As we are here on the reservation. It will be according to the

the trip. I could fetch your mare for custom of the tribe." "Married? Oh, my heart sings!" cried the girl. "I will be your wifeyours! I can't believe it- There comes Charlie. I must run and tell

> Vandervyn hastily released her, and drew his arm out of the window as he looked around.

"Wait!" he commanded. "He's com

ing fast enough. Leave the door

barred." hand went up to becken with a lordly mare up the creek bank at a furious dy was cold and ungracious.

gesture. There was a short pause, gallop. He flung himself out of the saddle and advanced upon Vandervyn, ed across the table at her and began

"What you saying to my sister?" he demanded.

The white man met his threatening look with a half-contemptuous, half-

amused smile. "I've been showing the girl what I

think of her," he replied. Redbear came to a sudden halt. The muscles of his face began to twitch.

"Oh, Charlie!" reproached Oluna. "What makes you look at him that way? Why don't you thank him?"

She unbarred the door and stepped outside.

"For what?" questioned her brother in a harsh, strained voice. "Because he is going to be my man-

going to take me for his wife." "Marry you? Oinna-you?" Through his dare shot a flash of angry to make him think we're gentled." suspicion. "But you-you won't marry

her!" Vandervyn smilled in his careless

"Oh, I guess yes,"

to town and marry her like white Negen up and gits killed. That makes

people marry. I'll not take her to square. But do you believe Hardy will town. Oinna and I have agreed to be look at it that way? Not by a-conliked to the opened window. The married according to tribal custom." Again Redbear's weak face darkcarlet and shrank back. He stopped ened with suspicion and anger. "I vation. won't have it. You're white, and Oinna

> "You know a lot about it, Charlie. Haven't you ever heard of common-law

married that way."

"What way?" "You must know about it. Instead mine." of going to a lot of first and bother over ministers and licenses, many

marriage?" asked Omna.

think I'm lying, do you? Why, you get hish into our exmp." often see in the newspapers about common-law wives getting their share of and Reggie's. He hasn't done a thing their dead husbands' estates, just the loward developing it." same as if they had gone through all that does not often happen."

"Welt, if it's a real marriage-" muttered Redbear.

so " cried Oinna rapturously.

den unconcealed exultance. He stammered almost incoherently; "Then no two ways about it, Mr. Van's hangyou-Marie-you don't marry-don't ing fire, a waiting to see if we loss

"No." replied Vandervyn, and his marry no poor girl off a reservation voice rang clear. "I have no Intention.

"Maybe Marie'll like me now, when I tell her you are going to be my

brother," sighed Redheur. Vandersyn laid a brotherly hand on its shoulder, "Hold out boy?" he said. You let me minage thegs. You know that Marie thinks she likes me. Hat now Hardy is here, and he wants her. If she hears that I have thrown bloudy, her ever, she will run off with him."

"She don't like him." how the girls like that. No-1 tell in a manner that brought a twinkle you there's not the ghost of a show linto Dopont's cunning eres. for you until he is out of the war. Our little bluff didn't work. He says he is riago, Tomorrow morning you and I ling the absence of Vanderyn and Redare going into the mountains to talk me. But it must be understood at the and discipline. agency that you have sent her to-

Who could you send her to?" "Ti-ows-konza is our mother's father. Not even Mr. Pupout knows of the mountains. Every cliff and that," said Redbear. "Before he came rock and pincy slope was familiar to here, she ran off with a bud white man, They went to the Blackfeet. After a time he got an arrow through his back. My mother came home. Thown-konrawould not see her face. She had to work for the agent till they made us go away to school. Then she died."

"Old Thunderbolt your grandfather?" remarked Vandervyn, selsing upon that one fact in the squalld tragedy. "Does he know it?"

"I told him so today. He said my face- But maybe he will come to like me. He said to bring Oinna for him to look at her."

"That's great! We'll tell it to everybody. But remember, not a word about the marriage until after we get rid of Hardy and I am agent. Then things will go all right for all of us. You savvy that, Charlie? While you rub down the mare I'll go in and say goodby until tomorrow morning."

CHAPTER VIII.

Best-Laid Schemes. Hardy had gone to the Duponts' for

grander than any officer, and you are supper when Vandervyn returned to the agency. He made a hasty toilet and followed. Marie met him with Vandervyn forced a smile, and repiled to her adulation without meeting marked coldness. This, however, melted before he had finished his report to Hardy. All agreed that the old chief probably would take a fancy to Oinna. and that, as a result, there would be a fair chance of pacifying the tribe.

When Hardy turned to the girl, he found her and Vandervyn exchanging glances and murmuring remarks. His habitual gravity softened to a smile of wistful sadness. At the first opportunity he excused bimself. Midnight had passed before the light in the little citified parlor of the Dupout house was extinguished.

When, at sunrise, Hardy went for breakfast, Marie's eyes were very bright and her look was pensive. She

After the officer left, Dupont squint-

to scratch his head. "You and Mr. Van burned a lot of coal oil last night. He didn't git far enough along to ask you to hitch up

with him, did he?" A red blush flamed in the girl's checks. Without looking up, she mur-

mured a regretful "No." "Guess he figures he'll wait and see if Hardy is going to bust us up. Like as not he'll skip back east if Hardy. gits sore and chokes off our hold on the mine."

"What do you thean? He'd send Reggie away. The stiff, solemn old fory-I hate him!"

"Linsy, easy, girl!" soothed Dupont. "No use plunging when you're hitched to the snubbing post. Just now he's got us roped. He'll have us all hoghalfbreed could not believe his ears, fied if we go to bucking. We've got

"What if we act toward him as we

feel? "You don't savvy about that mine, Me and Nogen discovered it and paid honest for developing it, as you know. "You'll marry her? You'll take her Well, we let Mr. Van in on it. Then it half and half between me and Mr. "I'll marry her as some white Van, according to all that's fair and siderable. He'll talk about it being the tribe's, just because it's on the reser-

"I see !" The girl's eyes flashed, and is hulf white. White people don't her nestrils dilated. "He will rob you and Reggie of a fortune-yet you wish

me to be nice to him?" "You bet I do! Can't you git the marriages? Lots of white people get point? He ain't going to be bluffed are quitting. That means we got to make friends with him or lose the

"Oh! So that is it?"

"Yep. Worst of it is he's one of people fust take each other for hus them there fellows what stand so band and wife and go to housekeep straight they lean backwards. We talked to him about how it would help "Is-is that a real white people's the tribe if he joined us in opening the mine. He was mighty offish. Guess Vandervyn frewned. "You don't we'll have to give him Nogen's third to

"What a shame! The mine is yours

"I know. But he's the agent. He's the fues of weddings. Ask Hardy if got us roped. He can rob us of our mine if we don't make friends with him. Now do you savey?" The girl's thick black eyebrows met

"Of course it is, Charlie, if he says in a frown of vexation. "If he is a man whose friendship must be bought, Her brother's face glowed with sud- I do not wish to be pleasant to him." "It's business, Marie. There sin't

> the mine. If we do, he can't afford to "Very well. I shall make myself agreeable to Captain Hardy. But wait until I am free to pay him out for it :"

"Nom d'un chien!" muttered Duyont of night of her straightened lips. "That's the Injun in you. Don't let him see you look that way till after we git the mine rinched."

"I am bot a food, mon pere." Dupont shook his grizzled head du-

But at midday, when Hardy come over for the noon dinner, Marie re-"What if she doesn't! He's an army covered his courteous greeting with a reactions one that soon linkboard the goes from here he will mear his unit possive severity of his look. Before form, all glif and spangles. You know the end of the mest they were chatting

The girl proposed a ride up the valter. Hardy was greatly pleased. Its going to stay. So for a while you and find already grouped the simple details Sena must keep still about the mar- of the agency bustness, and new, pendbeer, had nothing to do except instruct with the chiefs. Ginna will go with the police in his ideas of cleanliness

> Marie never looked more charming than when on a horse. She took her new friend for a long ride around one



"Is-Is That a Real White People's "Marriage!" Asked Oinna.

her. She pointed out all the grandest and most beautiful views, and showed berself even better versed in the lore of the wild than she had seemed to be posted on the culture and graces of polite society. After that there was no break in her friendly manner toward the captain for several days. Frequently they took other rides, over or around the nearest hills and moun-

******************* Do you believe that Vandervyn's deceitfulness with little Oinna will be punished by the Indians or do you think she will

(TO BE CONTINUEDA